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Marias were divided into two moieties containing ninety and sixty-nine 'septs' (for which this book uses the term 'clans') can only have been the country of the Hill Marias.

Unfortunately the records of the Rai Bahadur's enquiry are not forthcoming. But he appears never to have entered the Abujhmar hills, and his enquiries were probably based on questions put to Hill Marias at camps to which they came to see him in the plains. The list of hill clans in the appendix shows only fifty clans. My enquiries so far as possible covered even those Hill Maria *parganas* which I did not visit, and though my list is, no doubt, incomplete, the great difference between his 159 and my 50 clans must mean that he included many areas which are not Hill Maria areas, probably all Kutru zamindari, and all Antagarh tahsil.

The clan organisation of the Hill Marias

As we have seen, the clans are not merely little more than surnames; quite apart from questions of exogamy, they are, in the Abujhmar hills, practically political units, each, at least of the flourishing clans, with its own clan-area; and each clan had a *panchayat* system for dealing with everyday offences. Clans may feel themselves closer to some clans in kindred or affinity, as the case may be, than to others; but on the whole it is the social solidarity of the clan and its members, its '*bhumkal*' as the Marias say, that keeps the Hill Marias together. Had it not been for the strong feeling of the clan for its own *bhum* (earth) the mistaken and oppressive land revenue system in vogue till recently and the gross mismanagement of at least the Bastar zamindaris would have resulted in wholesale migration to Chanda District. As it was, many went, but generally a nucleus of the clans remained, and now that things are better in Bastar many of the emigrants are returning.

I started my enquiries strongly influenced by the passage quoted from Russell and Hiralal, and expecting that the hill clans would fall naturally into two moieties. So for long they did. I began with the great Usendi clan of Orcha and the Chhota Dongar hill *pargana*. So far as that *pargana* is concerned, the clans in it do fall into two moieties, the Usendi clan having six clans related to it as *dadabhai* (brother-clan) and fourteen as *akomama* (wife-clan); not only did each of the clans concerned agree that it stood in the relation shown to the Usendi clan, but their statements were confirmed by the actual marriages examined. But the first major difficulty arose in the adjacent Barsur Mar and Mangnar *parganas*. There is no doubt about the Usendi freely intermarrying with the important Gume clan which practically monopolizes Barsur Mar; the pedigree in the appendix, for example, shows four such marriages

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in cross-cousin relation. It is equally certain that the great Jugho clan of Adeq and other Chhota Dongar villages as well as of Itulnar in Bhairamgarh Mar regularly intermarries with and is *akomama* to the Usendi clan. If there were two moieties, all clans from which an Usendi could take a wife would have to be in the moiety other than that containing the Usendi clan; that is to say the Gumelor and the Jughalor would have to be in the same moiety and so would be *dadabhai* to each other and unable to intermarry. But actually they are *akomama* to each other and do intermarry quite often. Take again the important Jate clan of Mornar in Mangnar *pargana*, and its closely connected *dadabhai* clans the Tokalor and Hukur of Erpanar. They are *dadabhai* to the Usendi. On the two-moiety theory, therefore, they would be in the same moiety as the Usendi clan, and so would be any clan from which the Gumelor, with whom the Usendi, Jaterom, Tokalor and Hukur intermarry, might take a wife. The Gumelor often take wives from the Marvi clan of Tokhtoli and three other villages in Mangnar *pargana*. The Jaterom, Tokalor and Hukur should, therefore, be in the same moiety as that clan and debarred from taking wives from it; actually they consider themselves 'close *akomama*' relatives of the Marvi clan, and intermarriage is frequent. As, therefore, on the two-moiety theory Marvis must be in the opposite moiety to the Gumelor, they ought to be in the same moiety as the Usendi clan with whom the Gumelor intermarry; but, e.g., Marvi Bital, the headman of Tokhtoli, married his cross-cousin Usendi Puse of Juwara, continuing a chain of such marriages between the two families. The Jaterom-Tokalor-Hukur group of clans takes wives from Marvis and Gumelor, the Marvis from the Gumelor and the Jaterom-Tokalor-Hukur group, and the Gumelor from the Jaterom-Tokalor-Hukur group and the Marvis. Again, the Dhurwa clan is a close *dadabhai* of the Jughalor, and in practice (vide the pedigree) intermarries with the Usendi. It also intermarries with the Gumelor, who, as we have seen, themselves intermarry with the Usendi. This is another triangular example that cannot be fitted into the two-sided moiety theory. Examples can be found also in the north of the hills. The Farsal, Bardal and Gotal clans are very definitely *dadabhai* both to themselves and to the neighbouring Muria clans the Karangalor and Dughalor; the three of them marry mostly Jughalor girls, but also Usendi and Wadder girls, and the Usendi of the Kiringal and Dugal *pargana* are *akomama* to the Karangalor and Dughalor. On the two-moiety theory, therefore, the Usendi and Jughalor ought to be in the same moiety and, therefore, would not be allowed to intermarry. But actually they do, very frequently.

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The theory of two moieties therefore completely breaks down, and it is obvious that we are confronted by something approaching phratries. The Bison-horn Marias call their groups *kutmam* or *tarr* and their clans *katta*; but the Hill Marias know neither of the two former words, and, though some towards the south of the hills understand *katta*, they use the word *pari* that is in vogue for this purpose among all the Central Provinces Gonds. It is possible that they have some word for groups of clans, but I was unsuccessful in trying to get at it. They have some conception, however, of groups. The Usendi, Wadder, Katlami and Jaterom consider themselves brothers; Wikir Hunga, the god of the Usendis and Wadder, is a younger brother of Pat Raja, god of the Jaterom, and Pandu Hunga, god of the Katlamis, is the next brother after Wikir Hunga and has a Jate *waddai*; the Deda clan of Kurmer may also belong to the group, as its god Nule Harma is the youngest brother of Pat Raja. To the group would also belong the smaller clans of the Chhota Dongar *pargana* that are *dadabhai* to the Usendi, the Korami, Dodi, Deda and Parsal. Similarly the Jugho (*alias* Karme) clan says that the Dhurwa clan is its elder and the Dolwar clan its younger brother; their marriages are all consistent with membership of the same group, which possibly also includes the other Chhota Dongar clans of the list not mentioned above as *dadabhai* to the Usendi group, and the Yete clan of Kutru; all these are definitely *dadabhai* to the Jughalor. The Bardal, Farsal, Gotal, Nughoti, Tapa and Hichami clans of the north appear to be a group, to which would be added the Dughalor and Karangalor had they not become Murias and decided to discontinue the give and take of daughters in marriage with the Hill Marias. Of the grouping of the Kutru clans it is difficult to speak; but judging from marriages the Parllo, Jata, Kohka and Ark clans are a group of *dadabhai*, and *akomama* to another group consisting of the Boter, Wachami, Mohanda, Oyami, Mohke, and Pungati. The former group appears to be *dadabhai* to the Usendi group, and to be differentiated from it only by the fact that its members live in the Kutru zamindari, while the Usendi group is practically confined to the Antagarh tahsil. In Mangnar there is definitely a Jaterom-Tokalor-Hukur group, while the Marvi may belong to the same group as the Marvi phratry of the Bison-horn Marias and may include the small Alami and Nonde clans of Mangnar. The Gumelor of Barsur Mar seem to be in a group of their own so far as most of the Hill clans are concerned. The chief clans ungrouped in this tentative grouping are the Padal of Padalibhum and the Jati of Jarwara; both possibly come into the great Jughalor group.